

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 02575 122002Z

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TAGS: PDIP, US, UY

SUBJECT: REACTION TO BICENTENNIAL

REF: STATE 169682

1. IN ITS BICENTENNIAL ISSUE OF JULY 5, TIME MAGAZINE, SKETCHING WORLD ENTHUSIASM FOR THE BICENTENNIAL, SAID, HOWEVER, THAT LITTLE WAS HEARD ABOUT IT IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, "EVEN AMONG THE PRIVILEGED INTELLECTUAL CLASSES OF ASIA, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA," WHERE IT WAS MORE A CAUSE FOR "...CYNICISM AND CONCERN".

2. WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN THE CASE ELSEWHERE IN LATIN AMERICA, TIME'S DESCRIPTION SIMPLY DOES NOT FIT URUGUAY. THERE WAS GENUINE, SPONTANEOUS, ENTHUSIASTIC INTEREST IN THE AMERICAN BIRTHDAY HERE AND NUMEROUS EVIDENCES OF URUGUAYAN IDENTIFICATION WITH THE IDEALS AND TRADITIONS OF THAT CELEBRATION. MANY OF THE SPECIAL NEWSPAPER EDITIONS ARTICLES, SPEECHES AND PERSON-TO-PERSON COMMENTARIES NOTED URUGUAYAN POLITICAL DEBT TO THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE CONSTITUTION. MANY OBSERVED THE IMPACT OF THESE DOCUMENTS ON URUGUAY'S HERO AND LIBERATOR, JOSE ARTIGAS, WHO IS SAID TO HAVE CARRIED COPIES OF THEM WITH HIM DURING HIS CRITICAL YEARS OF ACTION.

3. OUR TWO MAJOR (OF FIVE) BICENTENNIAL RECEPTIONS WERE ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT DEMICHELI, THE FONMINISTER AND ALL HIGH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS INVITED. TRADITIONALLY THE PRESIDENT IN RECENT YEARS HAS ATTENDED NO NATIONAL RECEPTIONS AND PRESIDENT DEMICHELI, BECAUSE OF HIS AGE, HAS ACCEPTED NO SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS. ALSO,
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PAGE 02 MONTEV 02575 122002Z

APPROXIMATELY TEN OF THE GOVERNORS INVITED FROM INTERIOR DEPART-

MENTS TRAVELLED UP TO 250 MILES TO ATTEND OUR JULY 4 RECEPTION.

4. SPEECHES, SUCH AS THE SPONTANEOUS ONE DELIVERED BY FORMER MINISTER JORGE ECHEVERRIA LEUNDA AT THE BICENTENNIAL CENTER OBSERVANCE, AND ANOTHER BY AMBASSADOR AND FORMER FONMINISTER JULIO LACARTE MURO AT A ROTARY CLUB LUNCHEON, DEMONSTRATED NOT ONLY A KEEN APPRECIATION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BICENTENNIAL AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, BUT ALSO AN INTIMATE AND PENETRATING KNOWLEDGE OF THE IMPACT OF THESE EVENTS ON THE WORLD AND ON URUGUAYAN HISTORY ITSELF.

5. IDENTIFICATION WITH THE US ON THIS OCCASION, AND OPENLY EXPRESSED ADMIRATION, WAS NOT CONFINED TO THE UPPER CLASSES. AT THE 34TH RUNNING OF THE TRAVESIA DE AMERICA," AN ANNUAL CROSS-COUNTRY RACE HONORING AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 80 RUNNERS PARTICIPATED AND OVER 350 PERSONS, COMPRISING THE RUNNERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, WERE THE AMBASSADOR'S GUESTS FOR CHAMPAGNE AND PRIZE AWARDING THEREAFTER. THE OCCASION WAS ALSO MARKED BY THE MILITARY ACADEMY BAND PLAYING THE URUGUAYAN AND AMERICAN NATIONAL ANTHEMS AS WELL AS CONTINUOUS CONCERT OF SOUZA MARCHES AND OTHER AMERICAN MUSIC. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS OCCASION IS THAT ALL OF THE RUNNERS AND GUESTS ARE OF THE WORKING CLASS.

6. THE OUTPOURING OF EMOTION AND OF FRIENDSHIP TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES PROBABLY WAS BEST EXPLAINED BY DR. JULIO MARIA SANGUINETTI, A BRILLIANT YOUR FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION WHOM WRITES FOR EL DIA. WRITING OF MEN LIKE LINCOLN AND JEFFERSON, SANGUINETTI SAID, "WE FEEL THAT THEY ARE AS MUCH YOURS AS OUR OWN HEROES..." AND WRITING OF AMERICAN VALUES, HE SAID THAT THOSE SAME VALUES WERE SO INGRAINED IN URUGUAY THAT, "...URUGUAY CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD WITHOUT THAT SPIRIT." THE ESSENCE, SANTUINETTI EXPRESSED THE FEELINGS OF THOUSANDS OF URUGUAYANS WHO HAD, INDEED, MADE THE OBSERVANCE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL AN URUGUAYAN NATIONAL EVENT.

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